

THE CLEANING OF GREASY INSECTS.

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Inquiries regarding the cleaning of greasy insects are frequently addressed to the Editorial Board or the BULLETIN.

Our method is simple, effective and well-known. It is the use of high test gasoline in a shallow covered glass container, to the depth of about one and one-half inches.

The number of specimens to be cleaned at one time, of any Order, will be governed by the size of the container. The insects should be completely immersed, but not crowded. Name and locality labels may be left on the pins. The time for the degreasing process depends upon the condition, age, nature and size of the specimens. One or two days may be enough; one, two, or even more weeks will not do any harm. It is a good policy to subject all insects with a tendency to become greasy to this treatment as a part of their preparation, either before or after mounting.

Upon removal from the benzine (gasoline) the insects are placed in another shallow container filled with fine corn-meal. They should rest reversed upon the thorax and abdomen to assure rapid absorption of moisture. Corn-meal is preferable to plaster of Paris and gypsum because its fine grains do not adhere to the specimens after drying. Butterflies, moths and hairy insects in general while drying should be exposed to a slight circulation of air to effect the natural readjustment of fringes, hair, etc.

Some entomologists prefer other grease solvents, such as chloroform, ether, carbon bisulphide, gasoline, benzol. All, no doubt, will accomplish the same purpose in the same way, the difference being largely one of cost, inflammability and efficiency of the liquids as solvents of greases. Carbon tetrachloride is being recommended of late. This is non-inflammable and if mixed with other solvents at the rate of 25 per cent. to 50 per cent. it will render them non-combustible to a greater or less degree. A favorite medium in England is toluol, formula C_7H_8 , used in the following way: Take three shallow covered containers filled to a suitable depth with toluol. Immerse your specimens for 24 hours in the first container, then for another 24 hours in the second one and lastly for 24 hours in the third, which process is said to bring about complete rejuvenation. This process can be made a continuous performance by replacing the first lot of specimens by others as they are removed from one container to the next.